THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) The population as on April, 2004 is 108.13 crores and the estimated birth rate of 2004 is 25.0 per thousand population.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Birth Rate, Infant Mortality Rate and Total Fertility Rate are the basic indicators of success of population stablization measures. These indicators are on declining trends as given below:

Year	C.B.R.	I.M.R.	T.F.R.
1990	30.2	80	3.8
1995	28.3	74	3.5
2000	25.8	68	3.2
2002	25.0	63	Not available

Further the Government is addressing the issue of population stabilization by focusing on improved access to comprehensive integrated health services, including sustained behavioural change communication and improved access to Family Planning services in high fertility States.

Ban on gutkha and pan masala

950. SHRI RAVULACHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether many States including the State of Andhra Pradesh have requested the Union Government for issuance of notification for banning manufacture and sale of gutkha and pan masala in their States;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on their request; and

(c) by which date the notification is likely to be issued enabling the States to ban the manufacture/sale of gutkha and pan masala in their States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes Sir, the Central Government has received the requests from Government of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh to ban manufacture and sale of gutkha and pan masala in their States.

(b) and (c) The requests of these State Governments are being examined, in consultation with the Ministry of Law.

Migration of Indian doctors

951. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of large scale migration of Indian doctors abroad;

(b) whether Government propose to check such migration in order to improve health services in the country;

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) the number of doctors settled abroad during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) As per the provisions of the Emigration Act 1983, Medical Doctors, alongwith some other categories of persons have been placed under "Emigration check not required" (ECNR) category and have been exempted from seeking emigration clearance to go abroad. Hence no centralized record about emigration of Indian doctors to foreign countries is maintained. There is currently no proposal to check migration of Indian doctors to foreign countries.

As per information available with the Government, a total of 6,04,489 Allopathic doctors were registered with the Medical Council of India till March, 2003. Besides there are around six lakhs Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathic doctors registered with their respective Councils. The norm for availability of doctors to the population in the country has been recommended to be as 1:2000 by the Bhore Committee. As per information with the Medical Council of India, the availability of Allopathic doctors is at present in the ratio of 1:1800. If the practitioners of Indian System of Medicine and Homoeopathy are also taken into account, the ratio of availability of doctors to the population improves further. Though there is no shortage in the aggregate number of doctors produced, there is a geographical and speciality-wise imbalance in the availability of doctors.